

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application, and the rejection of claims 1-11, 13, 26, 29 and 31-33 are respectfully requested. Applicants have attempted to address every objection and ground for rejection in the Office Action dated April 5, 2005 (Paper No. 20050331). The claims have been amended to more clearly describe the present invention.

As a preliminary matter, the Examiner objects to the drawings under 37 C.F.R. 1.83(a). The Examiner asserts that the drawings fail to show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Specifically, the Examiner asserts that the feature of “inclined leading and trailing edges” of the cord channel are not shown on the drawings. However, Applicants submit that reference numbers 52 and 54 in Figures 1, 3 and 4 clearly indicate the “leading and trailing edges”, respectively, on the cord channel 24. On Figure 4 of the drawings, the reference number 52 indicates the edge of the arcuate cord channel. Specifically, the edge 52 is inclined, or ramped away from the cord channel so that the edge of the cord channel is not an abrupt corner but a smooth transition. As seen on Figure 3, there is an inclined or ramped edge on both the leading edge 52 and the trailing edge 54. For this reason, Applicants submit that the drawings comply with 37 C.F.R. 1.83(a). Applicants request that the Examiner acknowledge the compliance of the drawings.

The Examiner also objects to informalities in claims 10 and 29. In claim 10, line 2, "a power tool" has been replaced by "the power tool". In claim 29, "said contact means" has been replaced by "a contact means". Applicants submit that the informalities have been corrected by these amendments.

Applicants appreciate the acknowledgement of allowable subject matter in claims 12, 14-25, 27, 28 and 30 if rewritten in independent form including all of the features of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants elect not to amend the claims into independent form at this time.

Claims 1-6, 7-11, 13, 26, 29, 31-33 stand rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by US Patent No. 6,712,637 to Rosa et al. Independent claims 1 and 33 both recite the feature of a cord channel disposed on an outside surface of the tool and having an arcuate shape, the cord channel configured for contacting and supporting a loop of the cord substantially along a semi-circular path defined by the loop, among other things. The rejection of independent claims 1 and 33 will be addressed together, below.

Rosa et al. disclose a cord capture formation 310 and a cord channel 312 on the tool for retaining an extension cord. The cord channel 312 is a hook (FIG. 21) which hooks a loop of the cord introduced into the cord capture formation 310. However, the cord channel 312 is not arcuate and, further, the cord channel does not contact and support a loop of the cord substantially along a semi-

circular path defined by the loop, but merely hooks the loop along a linear surface of the hook.

First, Rosa et al. do not teach or suggest a cord channel that is arcuate. Instead, as seen in Figure 21, the cord channel is a right-angled structure with a flat side edge and a flat front edge under the hook 312, not an arc. The effect of the right-angled structure of Rosa et al. is that, as the cord comes around the cord channel, the cord is subjected to a right angle before it loops underneath the hook 312. Further, the cord is subjected to a point contact due to the sharp corners. A right angle or pointed contact with the cord can cause damage to the cord, such as puncturing or kinking.

Further, the portion of the loop underneath the hook 312 traverses a path along a straight surface, not a semi-circular path as claimed (shown in FIG. 21). In other words, the portion of the cord that contacts the hook portion does not form a semi-circular path, but a straight line, as it traverses underneath the hook extension. Thus, while the invention of Rosa et al. is merely concerned with storing the cord on the tool, the invention is not concerned with cord preservation because the cord is subjected to generally 90-degree angles which may stress or damage the cord (shown in FIG. 20).

Second, the cord channel of Rosa et al. is a hook that contacts and supports a loop of the cord along a *small fraction* of the cord loop, not *substantially* along the path defined by the loop, as required by the claims. The

only portion of the cord loop which is supported by the cord channel of Rosa et al. is the portion of the cord that is pulled against the wall located underneath the hook lip. Most of the path of the loop is unsupported by the cord channel.

In contrast, claims 1 and 33 recite, among other things, a cord channel disposed on an outside surface of the tool and configured for contacting and supporting a loop of the cord substantially along a semi-circular path defined by the loop. The present cord retention system is directed to cord retaining as well as cord preservation. Page 2 of the Background of the Invention explains that “sharp bending stresses of this type cause stresses on the internal wiring of the cords and may result in fraying of the cords and/or short circuits.” Page 3 explains that “conventional systems are often not satisfactory because they cause excessive and/or sharp bends in the cord, which shorten the life of the extension cord and may cause short circuits. Such stresses occur when the cord is forced into sharp bends around hooks or other projections...This problem is especially severe where the retention system creates a right angle bend in the cord...” Thus, the present cord retention system is configured to both contact and support the cord loop substantially along the semi-circular path of the loop. In view of the lack of any disclosure or suggestion of a cord channel disposed on an outside surface of the tool and configured for contacting and supporting a loop of the cord substantially along a semi-circular path defined by the loop, as recited in independent claims 1 and 33, the rejection based on Rosa et al. is respectfully traversed.

With respect to the rejection of independent claim 7, the claim has been amended to recite “wherein said attachment means is disposed on the tool immediately proximate a receptacle on the tool configured to receive the plug”, to distinguish from Rosa et al. In Rosa et al., the attachment means are anchored on the tool distance away from the receptacle, not immediately proximate the receptacle. In Rosa et al., the location of the attachment means on the tool requires the contact means to extend towards the receptacle to contact the plug. This configuration has the attachment structure occupying space where the user manipulates the plug in and out of receptacle. In contrast, in the present invention, since the attachment structure is immediately proximate the receptacle, it does not take up the space in which the user manipulates the plug in and out of the receptacle.

Similarly, with respect to the rejection of independent claim 29, the claim has been amended to recite “a ring disposed on the tool configured for attaching a contact means to the tool, said ring disposed on the tool immediately proximate a receptacle of the tool configured to receive the plug.” In the plug retainer of Rosa et al., the ring 304 is positioned a distance from the receptacle. For these same reasons, Applicants submit that claims 7 and 29, and the claims that depend therefrom, are allowable over the references of record.


Applicants submit that in view of the above-identified amendments and remarks, the claims in their present form are patentably distinct over the art of

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record. Allowance of the rejected claims is respectfully requested. Should the Examiner discover there are remaining issues which may be resolved by a telephone interview, he is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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